Equine Nursing

Equine nursing is an extremely popular career choice. Scarsdale Vets is an official Training Practice for student equine nurses. This means we have been approved to train equine nurses by a Primary Centre. The Primary Centre has to be approved by The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) to manage veterinary nurse training and assessment. Most Primary Centres are colleges or training providers. As well as a Primary Centre each student equine nurse has a designated Clinical coach to train and assess them through their course. Clinical coaches for equine nurses at Scarsdale Vets are Wendy Furness and Marie Rippingale.

Student equine nurses train on a day release basis, going to college one day per week. The course now lasts for three years. The first two years are spent studying all species, then students specialise in the third year to become either a small animal or equine nurse. Constant training and assessment is carried out at Scarsdale through the Clinical coaches and ‘The nursing progress log’ which is a requirement of the course and is an online portfolio. Students also have to write assignments and complete written and practical exams to qualify at the end of the three years.

Nurse who are qualified can go on to study for the prestigious Diploma in Equine Nursing; 2010/2011 is the first year it has been run for equine nurses and Marie is one of only three in the country who is enrolled on the course.

Diploma of Higher Education Clinical Veterinary Nursing (DipCVN)

This course is run at Myerscough College in conjunction with The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons is accessible. This course has been structured in such a way that will facilitate both the personal and professional development of qualified listed veterinary nurses and has both a theoretical and clinical perspective. The DipCVN assists students to:

- Demonstrate advanced clinical competency in veterinary nursing
- Embrace a holistic approach to veterinary nursing care
- Critically reflect and evaluate personal and professional development and the concept life-long learning.

RCVS Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (Equine or Small Animal) (Dip AVN)

The course will also facilitate the attainment of the RCVS Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (Equine or Small Animal) (Dip AVN). This is a distinct post-qualification award made by the RCVS achieved within a higher educational framework provided by the Diploma of Higher Education Clinical Veterinary Nursing (DipHE CVN) in conjunction with the attainment of an additional module, the Integrative Project. Be registered on the course by the RCVS

List of Modules

Year 1

- Essential Study, IT and Research Skills (Semester one) - This module will cover a range of study, time management, reflective and technology skills including word processing, spreadsheets and database. Use of library and electronic searching for source material as well as academic writing, presentation and use of reference and bibliographic material will be developed. An insight into the research process will also be introduced.
• **Law, Ethics and Professional Practice (Semester two)** - The module will cover relevant areas of criminal and civil law and the functions and interrelationships of representative and regulatory organisations as applied to veterinary practice. Completion of this module will equip students with an underpinning awareness of the ethical and legal aspects which are important in the delivery of all aspects of veterinary nursing care.

• **Applied Veterinary Physiology (year long)** - This module will cover the normal physiological functions of the major body systems with particular emphasis on homeostasis, the normal ageing process, physiological changes which occur during pregnancy and parturition and how an appreciation of normal and disordered physiology can influence patient care in the veterinary nursing environment. The module content will be focussed on either dogs and cats or horses depending upon the elected pathway of study.

• **Systematic Delivery of Veterinary Nursing Care (year long)** - The module will cover a historical review of the development of veterinary nursing and the role of veterinary nursing in the 21st century. It will also cover the Nursing Process and conceptual models of nursing care and their application to veterinary nursing care in the practice situation. The module content will be focussed on either dogs and cats or horses depending upon the elected pathway of study.

**Year 2**
This year incorporates specialist clinical optional modules. Marie has chosen to take the following options:

• **Veterinary Anaesthesia** - The module will cover the physiology and effects of anaesthesia, anaesthetic agents and their potential side effects, preparation of the patient, anaesthetic protocols and the equipment required in a variety of anaesthetic scenarios.

• **Veterinary Theatre Practice** - The module will cover the design, planning and use of a surgical theatre, the principles of safe and effective nursing practice in the operating theatre, potential risks to patients and operating personnel, safe and effective maintenance, sterilisation of surgical instruments and ancillary equipment.

• **Veterinary Surgical Nursing** - The module will develop the student’s awareness of the pathophysiology of veterinary surgical conditions encountered in the veterinary practice and focus on the importance of a systematic approach to the planning, management and evaluation of veterinary surgical cases.

• **Veterinary Medical Nursing** - The module will help students to develop their veterinary nursing skills and will cover the pathophysiology of veterinary medical cases, relating them to the nursing care required, diagnostic procedures employed and the principles of a systematic approach to the planning, implementation and evaluation of the nursing care of a range of medical cases.

The assessment for year two involves case reports, written exams and practical OSCE exam in each chosen subject.

**To achieve the RCVS DipAVN an additional module must be taken:**

• **Integrative Project** - This module will enable the student to demonstrate their ability to work independently in the production of a negotiated project of the student’s choice on an area of special clinical interest. The content of the module will be directed and identified during the exploration of the nature of the project. The project will demonstrate critical reflective and analytical skills in the selection, preparation and presentation of material. The assessment of this module will involve both Myerscough tutors and specialist RCVS examiners.